

May 27, 2010

1400 CST

Water Quality Protection Division

Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico Region 6 Update

Subject: **Water Quality Division Update # 20**
 Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico

Date: May 27, 2010

Reporting Period: May 27, 2010 1300 – May 28, 2010 1300

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Situation Status:

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Monitoring and Assessment

- Continuing to coordinate with the REOC Environmental Unit as they develop the Region 6 sampling plan. It is anticipated that Region 6's sampling plan and Region 4's sampling plans will be appended to an overarching executive summary, and that this will be posted on EPA's website and presented as EPA's overall sampling plan. Region 4 and 6 are coordinating to ensure that their sampling plans are consistent with respect to the analytes being measured and the analytical methods being utilized.
- Continuing to coordinate with the REOC Environmental Unit on the review of incoming water quality monitoring data, including results received from recently collected oil sample data (e.g., source oil, oil and debris, tarball, and mousse-like consistency oil samples) and incoming sediment toxicity testing results from samples collected at two stations.
- Continuing to coordinate with HQ (Office of Water) as they finalize the screening levels under development for use in evaluating water and sediment quality monitoring results, and as they develop a data analysis plan.
- Attending regular meetings and calls with Region 4, HQ, & REOC.

Drinking Water

- Drinking water intakes, public drinking water wells, and domestic wells have not been impacted by the oil sheen and are not projected to be impacted.
- EPA Region 6 is providing the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH) daily situation report as well as data summaries as they become available.
- EPA Region 6 continues to coordinate closely with the LDHH on all drinking water issues.

Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA)

- No changes since Wednesday 5-26-2010.

Coastal Habitat Impacts

Louisiana Large-Scale Coastal Barrier Plan:

- Staff is providing comments to OW on sand berm construction for the “40-mile plan,” including segments E3, E4, W8, W9, W10, and W11 and associated borrow sites and

stockpile areas. Work is in progress on developing success criteria for the proposed permit conditions.

- Staff is coordinating with OW, Region 4, and Region 6 attorneys and managers regarding Ocean Dumping Act and Clean Water Act aspects of dredging and disposal operations associated with the larger-scale sand berm proposal by the State. Initial draft regulatory scenarios have been prepared by Region 6, with concurrence by the Marine Pollution Control Branch.

Corps Emergency Authorizations for Coastal Protection Features:

- The Corps has coordinated with Region 6 and OW on a constant stream of emergency authorization requests for incremental work to install booms, sand bags, tiger dams, concrete blocks, and similar structures in the Chandeleur Sound and Barataria Bay. Regional staff members are supporting responses by OW.

Corps Navigation Maintenance Dredging:

- A conference call (Region 6, Region 4, and OW) is scheduled for today to discuss various aspects of dredged material management and ocean dumping. Testing protocols and reference test site issues will be discussed as they relate to Corps of Engineers' navigation channel maintenance in areas of likely oil contamination.
- A decision is pending by a BP contractor, Entrix, on a Corps request (backed by rationale provided by Regional staff) for including the EPA-designated SW Pass Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site (ODMDS) in a larger request to drag sorbent material in navigation channels to see if oil is present in the lower portions of the water column or on the sediment surface.

OW Ecological Impact Analyses:

- Bryon Griffith, Director of the Gulf of Mexico Program, visited the Region yesterday to discuss landscape analytical capabilities of the Naval Research Center, which could be used to track oil spill impacts and habitat responses.
- Regional staff and several National Estuary Program staff will participate in the second Gulf Oil Spill Interagency Monitoring Coordination Call today.
- Ongoing analyses are underway concerning hypoxia, long-term landscape-scale impacts to coastal habitats, and other ecological impact scenarios.

Data Management – Mapping Efforts

- Ongoing efforts gathering data sets and maps to determine if water and sediment samples collected by contractor and considered base line were impacted by the oil spill.
- Visual observations from BP and USCG added to geodatabase.

NPDES

- Continue to coordinate, as required, with 6WQ, 6EN, 6RC, and HQ staff on NPDES permitting and enforcement issues.
- The NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch is continuing to evaluate its authority in implementing a moratorium on future offshore drilling operations.
- NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch continues to be available to provide technical assistance as needed.